

U.S. Offshore Milestones

[Abbreviations: **GOM** = Gulf of Mexico; **OCS** = Outer Continental Shelf; **OPA** = Oil Pollution Act]

PRE Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act

1938	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First GOM offshore discovery well drilled in State waters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creole Field, 2.4 km (1.5 mi) from Louisiana coast in 4.2 m (14 ft) of water from a 100 x 300 ft drilling platform secured to a foundation of timber piles.
1946	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First GOM exploratory well drilled in Federal waters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 km (10 mi) southeast of Eugene Island by the Magnolia Petroleum Company.
1947	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First well drilled from fixed platform offshore almost out of sight of land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ship Shoal area 19.3 km (12 mi) south of Terrebonne Parish, LA, in 4.8 m (16 ft) of water by Kerr-McGee. Fixed platform/drilling tender combination was major breakthrough in drilling-unit design for offshore use.
1953	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submerged Lands Act passed Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirms and establishes title and ownership of submerged lands; federal jurisdiction set at 3 miles or 3 leagues from State coastline. Provides for Federal jurisdiction over submerged lands of the OCS and authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to lease those lands for mineral development.

POST Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act

1958	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Pacific offshore drilling platform erected in State waters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.2 km (2 mi) offshore Summerland, California, by Humble Oil & Refining company and Western Operations, Inc.
1964	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Pacific OCS exploratory well drilled in Federal waters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offshore northern California by Humble Oil
1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Alaska discovery made by exploratory well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prudhoe Bay Field, Alaska, by ARCO
1969	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Santa Barbara Oil Spill National Environmental Policy Act passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platform blowout spurs development of oil spill regulation and research Requires a detailed environmental review before any major or controversial Federal Action.
1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Air Act passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulates the emission of air pollutants from industrial activities
1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coastal Zone Management Act passed Marine Mammal Protection Act passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires State review of Federal action that affects the land and water use of the coastal zone. Provides for the protection and conservation of all marine mammals and their habitats
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endangered Species Act passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a permit for the taking of any protected species and requires that all Federal actions not significantly impair or jeopardize protected species or their habitats.
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Alaska Continental Offshore Stratigraphic Test well drilled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gulf of Alaska
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Alaska lease sale held First Alaska OCS exploratory well drilled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No. 39 in Gulf of Alaska. Bonus bids total over half a billion dollars (\$571,871,587). Gulf of Alaska, Block 106, by Shell Oil.
1977	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean Water Act passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulates discharge of toxic and nontoxic pollutants into the surface waters of the United States